Increase in number of pilgrims for Kailash-Mansarovar

†*247. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sent any proposal to Chinese Government to increase the number of pilgrims visiting Kailash-Mansarovar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Chinese Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) In August, 2002, it was agreed with the Chinese side to increase the maximum number of pilgrims going to Kailash-Mansarovar every year through the existing route *via* Lipulekh Pass from 560 to 704. Due to the attitude, weather conditions and the limitation of infrastructure facilities on the Chinese side, it is difficult at present to further increase the number of pilgrims going through this route. Government have, however, proposed to the Chinese side on several occasions in recent years additional routes to Kailash-Mansarovar. During his visit to China in June, 2003, Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee also raised the issue of additional routes during his meeting with the Chinese Premier. The Chinese Premier responded that the Chinese side would consider the request according to the conditions in Tibet.

Children covered under the NCLP

*248. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of children covered under the National Child Labour Project since its inception, State-wise;

(b) budget allocated for eliminating the child labour under NCLP, State-wise; and

(c) what action plan does the Ministry have to eliminate child labour by the year 2007?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.